



The HIGH ROAD

"Preserving public confidence in public servants."

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Hawaii State Ethics Commission

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ALOHA, COMMISSIONER BINTLIFF

Sharon "Shay" Bintliff, M.D., resigned from the State Ethics Commission in January. Dr. Bintliff, a physician on the Big Island, resigned due to the demands of a very busy schedule. She logged the most miles of any commissioner to attend commission meetings by commuting from Kona to Honolulu. The Commission sends its best wishes and thanks to Dr. Bintliff. We will miss you, Shay!

COMMISSION RELEASES SUMMARY OF LOBBYING EXPENDITURES FOR MARCH 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 1995

Lobbying expenditures reports filed with the State Ethics Commission show that from March 1, 1995 through December 31, 1995, lobbying expenditures exceeded 1.6 million dollars. The Commission recently released a summary of lobbying expenditures reported for this period. The summary lists over 200 organizations that engaged in lobbying activities, the names of registered lobbyists retained by the organizations, and the total amounts spent by the organizations. The Commission's summary and all lobbying expenditures reports filed with the Commission are available for public review.

The Commission also has released a list of all registered lobbyists for 1996. The list includes the names of the lobbyists and the organizations that they represent.

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS: WHY ARE THEY REQUIRED?

About 1,600 state officials and employees file financial disclosure statements each year with the State Ethics Commission. Why are these disclosure statements required? Who has to file

them? What does the Commission do with the disclosure statements? Here are the answers to these and other commonly asked questions.

Why are financial disclosure statements required? The Hawaii State Constitution and the State Ethics Code require certain state officials and employees to file financial disclosure statements. The disclosures are a legal requirement of state office. Elected officials and high-ranking state employees must file public disclosure statements. These filings allow the public the opportunity to evaluate financial interests which might bring about conflicts of interests. In the interests of privacy, certain nonelected officials and employees file confidential financial disclosure statements that are seen only by the Commission. The review of these statements allows the Commission to take action on possible conflicts of interests before problems arise.

Lobbying Expenditures Report Reminder:

The next lobbying expenditures report deadline is March 31, 1996. Because March 31 falls on a Sunday, the filing deadline is Monday, April 1, 1996. The report covers the period from January 1, 1996 through February 29, 1996. The report must be postmarked or filed in the Commission's office by April 1, 1996. If you have not already received an expenditures report form, call the State Ethics Commission at 587-0460.

Who must file a financial disclosure statement? The State Constitution and the financial disclosure law (section 84-17, Hawaii Revised Statutes) specify who must file a financial disclosure statement. Some of the officials and employees who must file are: The governor, lieutenant governor, and members of the legislature; department directors, deputy directors, and division chiefs; hearings officers; the University of Hawaii president, vice presidents, chancellors, and provosts; the Board of Education, the superintendent of education, and the state librarian; the board of trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) and the administrator of OHA; and the members of all state boards whose original terms of office exceed one year and whose functions are not solely advisory. In addition, all candidates for state elective office must file financial disclosure statements before an election.

What financial interests must be reported on a disclosure statement? The law requires the disclosure of income received for services rendered; ownership interests in businesses; officerships, directorships, and trusteeships held in businesses; creditors to whom more than \$3,000 is owed; interests in real property; the names of clients represented before state agencies; and creditor interests in insolvent businesses. State officials and employees must disclose their financial interests as well as the financial interests of their spouses and dependent children.

What does the Commission do with financial disclosure statements? Public disclosure statements become part of the Commission's public records and are made available for inspection and duplication. Confidential disclosure statements are seen only by the Commission and its staff. If the Commission detects a possible conflict of interest, the Commission will contact the filer for appropriate action.

What are the penalties for not filing a financial disclosure statement? Failure to file a financial disclosure statement is a violation of the State Ethics Code that may result in charge proceedings by the Commission, a public hearing, and disciplinary action or removal from state office. Candidates for state office who do not file must pay a \$25 fine and may face further charge proceedings.

NEIGHBOR ISLAND ETHICS WORKSHOPS

Ethics workshops for state employees will be held on the neighbor islands on the following dates:

March 25	Maui (Maui Memorial Hosp)
April 11	Kauai (Lihue Office Bldg)
May 2	Kona (Keahole Airport)
June 13	Hilo (75 Aupuni Street)
July 22	Maui (Maui Memorial Hosp)
August 15	Kauai (Lihue Office Bldg)
Sept 5	Kona (Keahole Airport)

The workshops will run from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. The March 25 workshop on Maui is full but registration is still open for all other workshops. To register, employees should contact their personnel offices.

Staff attorneys from the Commission will instruct workshop participants about the major provisions of the State Ethics Code. Subjects covered by the attorneys include conflicts of interests, gifts, misuse of position, and disclosure of confidential information. The workshops have been designed to be highly interactive, involving participants in lively discussions of the State Ethics Code using hypothetical cases that are based on real issues that have come before the Commission. Participants are welcome to enhance these discussions with questions or issues of their own. If interested, don't wait--call your personnel office now! Workshop space is limited--and they fill up fast!

Next Issue: State Travel At Private Expense. *With reduced state funding available for travel, employees have asked whether they may accept trips for state business that are paid for by private companies. These trips are considered gifts under the ethics laws. Our next issue will discuss how the gifts laws apply to the trips and whether or not employees may accept them.*

The High Road is a publication of the Hawaii State Ethics Commission.

Commissioners: Leolani Abdul, Chair; Bernard LaPorte, Vice Chair; Arlene Ellis; Carl Sakata

Executive Director: Daniel Mollway

Address: P.O. Box 616
Honolulu, HI 96809

Telephone: 587-0460 Fax: 587-0470